



# PARKWAY MILEPOST



## The Parkway Image...

### *On the Landscape, On Postcards, and On Coins*

Preserving images of America's national parks began before there were parks. Many people credit artist George Catlin who traveled to the Dakota territory in the 1830s, cataloguing what he saw as the destructive effects of

America's westward expansion on Native American civilizations along with wildlife and wilderness. Other images by other artists helped propel the national park movement throughout its early history, enticing the American public to visit the continent's most scenic and fascinating landscapes. These efforts led to the establishment of Yellowstone National Park in 1872. A vigorous public relations campaign in 1916, headed by National Geographic and The Saturday Evening Post, stamped more images in the minds of more Americans, resulting in the creation of the National Park Service as an agency whose sole purpose was to protect and conserve these special places.



The Blue Ridge Parkway's image has been similarly captured throughout the years in a variety of places from calendars to books. Dating to the earliest days when only certain parts of the Parkway had been completed for travel, the paintings of Parkway scenes on postcards were popular items.



The literal stamping of images continues today with the "America's Beautiful National Parks Quarter Dollar Act". Passed by Congress in 2008, iconic images of a select group of America's National Parks are being stamped on

these pieces of U.S. currency each year. Later this year, the Blue Ridge Parkway will be commemorated in the series as the image chosen for the North Carolina state quarter.

The selection of a national park or other national site is made by the Secretary of the Treasury in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior and the governor of the state. "The site chosen," according to the 2008 legislation, "shall be the most appropriate in terms of natural or historic significance." Without doubt, the Parkway fits these guidelines as one of the most popular attractions and iconic images anywhere in Virginia or North Carolina. As the National Park Service unit with the most visits for many years up until recently, the Parkway's graceful design and intricately planned details make it the primary choice for those wishing to visit this special region of America.

In determining the design for the 2015 quarter, park staff faced many of the same questions that the early designers of the road itself must have faced. What do we include? What do we leave out? How do we portray the Blue Ridge Parkway in a single image? The task was not an easy one.



Artists and designers collected images of the Parkway, visited multiple stretches of the road, and sent sketches and concepts to consider. The final choice, made by a hand-selected nationwide panel, includes all of the elements that make the Parkway what it is to visitors today.

The curvature of the road, rock tunnel portals, distant views, and representative flora and fauna from this part of the world are captured in the final design. When the coin is officially unveiled and made available to the public later this year, there will also be lesson plans available for children to learn more about the significance of the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Images on canvas, on postcards, and on film have always played a significant role in providing support for the national parks, and the America's Beautiful National Parks quarter series is just the latest example.

*The Parkway's image on the landscape has been described in a variety of ways – sublime, graceful, even gently lying on the land.*

# Designing the Parkway

The landscape architects who envisioned and laid out the scene and the engineers who built the design on the land

thought of this project as a work of art... it would have no dead areas and every detail must be exact. The image of the road and the landscape it revealed would, by design, have its broad, sweeping vistas along with the close up details. "Like a good piece of music," said Stanley W. Abbot, one of the earliest and most important visionaries, "it needs some fortissimo as well as its pianissimo" to keep the travelers' interest. The Parkway's constructed detail – its image – was guided by a number of overall concepts or principles and knowing something about those principles enhances your visit today.

***Broadly speaking, the road was to nestle gently on the land, blending into a protected corridor, giving the impression that the horizon would be the boundary.***

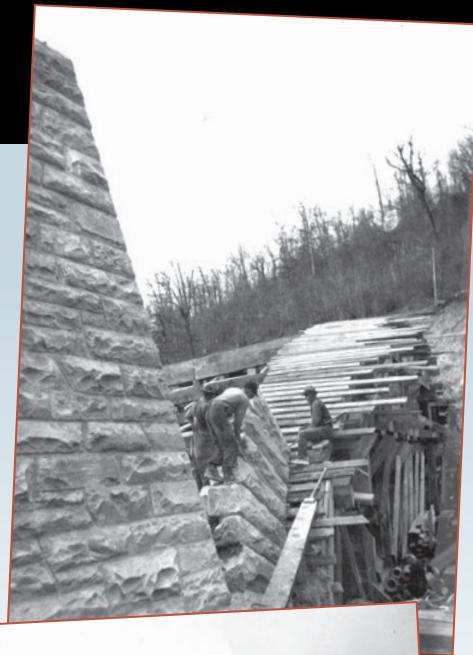
Overall, the Parkway was "to reveal the charm and interest of the native American countryside" as the designers perceived that to be. Log cabins and barns, rail fences, and "pioneer ways" were looked upon much more favorably than some of the more modern representations of America that had already found their way into the mountains in the 1930s and 1940s.

Broadly speaking, the road was to nestle gently on the land, blending into a protected corridor, giving the impression that the horizon would be the boundary. Nothing in the view shed as far as the eye could see would spoil the travelers' experience. In its design, the Parkway and all of its associated structures, including signs, guardrails, and lined ditches would be characterized by simplicity and informality in

order to harmonize with the environment. In this respect, "All elements must compose" became the guiding principle. Deviating from the continuous mountaintop location of the Skyline Drive through Shenandoah National Park, the Parkway design offered a variety of kinds of viewing experiences. "One can get gorged on scenery," Abbot later said, so he viewed the Parkway as "following a mountain stream for a while, then climbing up on the slope of a hill pasture, then dipping down into the open bottom lands and back into the woodland." This variety was the "spice" of the Parkway. The Blue Ridge and Southern Appalachian region was not by any means pristine in the 1930s. Floods, fires, excessive logging, and the accompanying erosion had left a scarred landscape. The Parkway was, in many ways, a restoration project, and the planners had two other principles in mind related to this. All care should be taken to heal the scars carried by man's use of the land and by construction of the Parkway and it would be "married"

with the cultural and natural landscape. In a number of areas along the road, large parcels of land were acquired where visitors could camp, picnic, hike, or gain overnight lodging. These areas took in whole "scenic pictures" and were thought of as wayside parks, becoming the gems on the necklace.

Unlike most national park areas, the Blue Ridge Parkway is a planned landscape – planned down to the smallest detail in ways that most visitors do not notice at first glance. The skills and creative genius of both landscape architects and engineers dovetailed together for the benefit of the millions who have enjoyed this drive for almost eight decades.







While most visitors travel the Parkway in an automobile, ever increasing numbers visit the park on two wheels, via bicycle or motorcycle. Remember, spectacular views are best enjoyed at one of the Parkway's many overlooks. Be aware of rapidly changing road character and environmental conditions, particularly when the roadway curves and descends at the same time. Please enjoy the views, but watch the curves.

## Spotting the Details Along the Way

- ▶ Crossing most Parkway bridges, look for the continuous road shoulder of grass, a design feature intended to keep from disrupting the natural look of the road or the idea that it blends into the landscape.
- ▶ There is no side striping on the sides of the Parkway, once again giving the look and feel of the road blending into the natural environment of the road shoulders.
- ▶ The drainage culverts and headwalls beneath the road are usually designed as stone structures even though they are out of sight to motorists on the Parkway, emphasizing the attention early planners gave to the details of the construction.
- ▶ Look for the long, distant views that many times open up as you travel out of a curve, allowing the eyes to catch the view almost by surprise.
- ▶ There are very few straight lines in nature, so the Parkway was designed with few straight lines as well. The landscape architects called this a curvilinear design, one curve blending into the next.
- ▶ Notice the many different kinds of fences along the Parkway, made of stone, wood, or a combination of both, always designed for rustic beauty and function.
- ▶ Many Parkway buildings such as picnic shelters, comfort stations, or visitor centers, carry on the design in form, function, and materials of structures that were here before the Parkway.

## 100th anniversary

2016 marks the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service and while America has changed dramatically since the 1916 birth of the Park Service, the core mission remains the same to provide exemplary stewardship of and to provide for the public enjoyment of the special places the NPS manages.

The roots of the National Park Service lie in the parks' majestic, and sometimes isolated natural wonders and in places that reflect our nation's history and cultural heritage. Today, the reach of the agency extends beyond the traditional parks and into urban centers, across rural landscapes, deep within oceans, and across night skies.

In 2016, the Service will recommit to its core mission and celebrate the expanded contributions that national parks and the agency's community assistance programs make to create jobs, strengthen local economies, and support ecosystem services and will look to strategically leverage resources to further our contributions to society.

[www.nps.gov/subjects/centennial/index.htm](http://www.nps.gov/subjects/centennial/index.htm)



## GENERAL DRIVING SAFETY

*Because of its unique design, the Parkway drive is different than most and this can mean taking some extra care to ensure a safe visit. "Enjoy the view, but watch the road!" is our way of reminding visitors to pay extra attention along the Parkway. A few specific pointers and facts may help even more.*



### WATCH OUT FOR...

**STEEP GRADES** – In some places, the Parkway has steeper grades than normally found on highways. Without paying close attention, your speed can increase far more than you expect.

**UNFORGIVING ROAD SHOULDERS** – The Parkway's road shoulders are narrow in places so that the meadows or forest edges grow close to the pavement. This is, of course, part of the beauty of the drive, but may require some extra attention.

**BUILT-IN DISTRACTIONS** – Wildlife, wildflowers, bicyclists, and extraordinary views... all of these contribute to the Parkway experience and every traveler should be aware of these while enjoying the drive.

**LIMITED SIGHT DISTANCES** – There aren't many straight lines in the natural world and the Parkway was designed with gentle curves and not many straight sections. This is part of what makes the road seem to lie gently on the land and it also requires some extra attention while driving.

**SPEED CHANGES** – The Parkway speed limit is mostly 45 mph, but occasionally you will find yourself in developed areas where the driving speed drops to 25 mph.

**SPIRAL CURVES** – Some of the tight curves do not have a consistent radius so extra care needs to be taken, especially on motorcycles.

## BICYCLING



- ▶ Wear a bicycle helmet. North Carolina law requires it for persons 16 and under and many Virginia counties do as well, but it's the safe thing to do regardless of your age.
- ▶ Wear high visibility clothing. It sets you apart from the scenery and makes you more visible to motorists.
- ▶ When cycling in a group, adjust your spacing to allow motor vehicles to pass safely.
- ▶ Exercise caution when riding through tunnels. There are 26 tunnels in North Carolina and 1 tunnel in Virginia.

Don't miss the Autumn season splendor of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

A truly spectacular sight!



## Regulations By Recreational Activity

To help protect and preserve the Blue Ridge Parkway, yourself, and others, observe all park regulations. Be alert for uncontrolled fire, safety hazards, accidents and emergencies. Please report such conditions by calling 9-1-1.

**ROADSIDE PARKING** - Parking is allowed on road shoulders, but please avoid wet areas and make sure that all four wheels are off the pavement.

**TRAILS** - Trails are for hiking only. Bicycles and motorized vehicles are not permitted. Several horse riding trails are available.

**CAMPING** - Camping is permitted only in park campgrounds or designated back-country sites. See Camping information, page 9.

**PETS** - All pets must be on a leash (maximum six feet) or under physical restraint at all times while in the park. The territorial instinct of dogs can lead to fights with other dogs on the trail. Dogs also frighten hikers and chase wildlife. If a pet cannot be kept under control, it should be left at home. Only service animals are permitted in facilities.

**LAKE AND PONDS** - These are for fishing and scenic beauty only, with no swimming allowed. Nearby U.S. Forest Service recreation areas, state parks, and mountain resorts often have swimming facilities.

**PREVENT FOREST FIRES** - Fires are permitted in the provided grills or fire pits in campgrounds and picnic areas only.

**BOATS** - Only on Price Lake, boats without motors or sails are permitted.

**LITTER** - Deposit all litter in the trash cans provided.

**ALL NATURAL RESOURCES ARE PROTECTED** - Leave wildflowers and other vegetation in their natural condition for others to enjoy. Do not disturb animal or plant life in any way. Hunting and trapping are prohibited. Do not interfere with animals by feeding, touching, or frightening them. Do not cut, deface, or damage trees.

**ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES** - Possession of open containers of alcohol in vehicles is prohibited. Alcohol is permitted in campgrounds by registered campers and in picnic areas until 9:00 PM.

## Accessibility:

Most parkway facilities are wheelchair usable. Some facilities have minor slopes and/or structural barriers. Use the grid shown here for site specific information. If more detailed information is needed, please contact the Blue Ridge Parkway Headquarters, 199 Hemphill Knob Road, Asheville NC 28803 or call 828-298-0398.

## PLACES TO PAUSE ALONG THE PARKWAY...

Check [www.nps.gov/blri](http://www.nps.gov/blri) for availability of food and lodging during the 2015 season.

	Milepost	Visitor Center	Camping	Exhibits	Programs	Restrooms	Picnic Areas
Humpback Rocks	5.8	H		H	HP	H	X
Otter Creek	60.9				H	HP	
James River	63.8			H			
Peaks of Otter*	86	H	H	H	H	H	HP
Explore Park VC	115	H		H		H	
Roanoke Mountain	120.4				H		
Rocky Knob^	169		H		HP	HP	H
Mabry Mill **	176.1			HP	HP	HP	
Groundhog Mountain	189					HP	H
Blue Ridge Music Cntr	213	H		H	H	H	
Cumberland Knob	217.5					H	H
Doughton Park	241.1		H	HP	HP	HP	
NW Trading Post	258.6					H	
Jeffress Park	272					HP	H
Cone Park	294.1	H		H	H	H	
Price Park	297.1		H		H	HP	H
Linn Cove Viaduct	304.4	H		H		H	
Linville Falls	316.4	H	H	H	X	H	H
Minerals Museum	331	H		H	H	H	
Craggy Gardens	364.6	H		H		HPA	H
Folk Art Center	382	H		H	H	H	H
Parkway Visitor Ctr.	384	H		H	H	H	H
Mt Pisgah*	408.6		H		HP	H	HP
Waterrock Knob	451.2	H		H	H	H	

H – Wheelchair Accessible. HP – Accessible with Assistance.

X – Not Handicapped Accessible.

HPA – Located in Picnic Area. \*- Lodging and Dining Available.

\*\* Dining Available. ^ Lodging Available.



## Camping

Of the Parkway's eight campgrounds, most have at least some sites that will accommodate sizeable recreational vehicles, and all offer restrooms, drinking water, picnic tables and grills. The settings are tranquil and scenic, and most offer ready access to miles of hiking trails for those who want to explore on foot.

***Be sure to ask about Ranger talks and campfire programs that are given most weekends and occasionally during the week.***

Most campgrounds are at elevations of more than 2,500 feet, which means that temperatures are usually cooler than in the surrounding area. Even in summer a sweater can come in handy.

Campgrounds are open early May through October. Reservations may be made for some sites at the **Peaks of Otter, Rocky Knob, Price Park, Linville Falls, Doughton Park** and **Mt. Pisgah** campgrounds. Showers facilities are only available at Mt. Pisgah campground. All other campgrounds and sites are "first come, first served." To make a reservation, visit [www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov) on the Internet or call toll-free (877) 444-6777. As a general rule, demand is higher on weekends and holidays. Go to the Plan Your Visit/Things To Do page at [www.nps.gov/blri](http://www.nps.gov/blri) for camping fee information.

Group camping is available only at **Linville Falls Campground**. Call (828) 765-6082 for more information. In addition, limited backcountry camping is available via permit at **Basin Cove in Doughton Park**. (336) 372-8568, **Rock Castle Gorge** (540) 745-9661 or **Johns River Road Trail** (828) 295-7591.

**Camping outside of designated campgrounds or without a permit at backcountry sites is prohibited.**



## Lodging & Dining

Lodges are located on the Parkway at **Peaks of Otter** (MP 86), and **Mt. Pisgah** (MP 408).

Restaurants, other facilities and services are available at a number of other locations, opening in mid- or late April.



Pisgah Inn • Treetops

***Check [www.nps.gov/blri](http://www.nps.gov/blri) for availability of food and lodging during the 2015 season.***

## Fishing

The Parkway lies along the headwaters of many regional watersheds. Thirteen lakes were constructed for aesthetic beauty and recreational opportunities. Streams, ponds, and rivers give anglers ample opportunity to test their skills for trout, bass, and panfish. A state license from either North Carolina or Virginia is valid for fishing in all park waters. Creel limits and other regulations vary. Ask a ranger for details.

## Be A Good Guest In Bear Country!

Seeing bears can be the highlight of any visit to a national park. However, while visitors to the Parkway come and go, bears and other wildlife live here. Your actions can have a lasting impact on the behavior and health of these magnificent animals. Bears quickly lose their natural fear of people if fed human food, so do not feed them, crowd them or observe them too closely. Store all food, coolers, utensils or anything that may smell like food in locked vehicles. Place litter in garbage cans as soon as possible.

## Restrooms

Restrooms are available at visitor centers, picnic areas and restaurants along the Parkway.

# WHAT'S "PEAKING" ALONG THE PARKWAY?

*Depending on the season and perhaps the personal interest of the visitor, many questions coming to Parkway staff have to do with "peak seasons." When things happen in the natural world can't be predicted precisely because of the variety of factors coming into play. The following short list gives some guidance, however, and may help you find your favorite "peak" event.*

## Rhododendron

Catawba rhododendron is the purple variety that blooms from early June around the Peaks of Otter in Virginia to the third week of June at Craggy Gardens in North Carolina. Any time between these dates, there are spots of the variety in bloom. Rosebay rhododendron is the larger, white or pink variety that begins in late June and blooms into July, primarily through Rocky Knob, Virginia.

## Hawk Migration

Many species of hawks migrate south during the winter and one of their major routes follows the spine of the Blue Ridge. Warm air in the valleys rises up the sides of the mountains and hawks catch a ride on these thermals, circling higher and higher, almost going out of sight. Then they head south, coasting or gliding in order to save energy and flying as far down the ridge as possible. They will find another thermal, make another twisting, corkscrew ascent, and then another glide south. This pattern takes them hundreds of miles down the mountains toward their winter destination. North of Roanoke, Virginia at Harvey's Knob Overlook (Milepost 93.5) is a favorite spot for hawk watchers from September through November. Mahogany Rock (Milepost 235) in North Carolina is also a popular spot. Tens of thousands of hawks, along with a few Peregrine Falcons and perhaps a Bald Eagle are counted by local birding clubs each year during this spectacular migration.

## Fall Foliage

Fall is the season when the Blue Ridge attracts the most attention. Travelers, nature writers, photographers, and artists come to enjoy the visual display created by hardwood leaves changing from summer green to autumn gold, red, and orange. Visiting here in the peak of the fall color season is a sight that few fail to appreciate. Finding the right "window" of time and the perfect spot can perhaps be nothing more than good fortune, but keeping a few things in mind and exercising some patience can increase anyone's chances of seeing the Blue Ridge in its autumn glory. Typically, the Parkway experiences the much anticipated change in fall foliage around the middle of October. Many factors contribute to variations in when and where colors will peak, with moisture throughout the year and the colder temperatures being key factors. In a park that is 500 miles north to south and varies over 5,000 feet in elevation, the best plan for witnessing fall color is to drive some distance on the Parkway, changing elevations and north-south orientation. A little planning in mid to late October will yield at least some of the spectacular color that we're famous for.

## Monarch Butterflies

During the latter half of September, a little-known aspect of the grand scheme of nature unfolds along the Parkway as Monarch butterflies begin an epic migration. These familiar orange and black striped beauties are often seen on milkweed plants late in the summer. At Cherry Cove Parking Overlook (Milepost 415.7) south of Mt. Pisgah, visitors gather in mid-September to witness the north to south migration. Thousands of Monarchs may pass by here and other nearby places on a daily basis.

## Wildflowers

Although visitors may know the precise place and time on the Parkway to view their favorite species of wildflowers in bloom, there is little doubt that May is, overall, the best month for wildflowers. May apple, trillium, some lingering bloodroot, Jack-in-the-pulpit, lady slippers, bleeding heart, and Firepink – all of which are among the most admired and photographed in the region – make their appearance at some time during the month. As with any blooming species, elevation can make lots of difference, so enjoy a long, leisurely drive, meander down a trail, and enjoy this special month of the year.

## Fall leaf guide

**Use this guide to identify the brilliant colors of Blue Ridge Parkway trees during fall leaf season.**





# PARKWAY BY THE SEASONS / WEATHER

*As you plan your trip to the Blue Ridge Parkway, keep in mind that elevation and, to a lesser degree, your north-south orientation can make a big difference! The Parkway's elevation ranges from 649 feet at Virginia's James River to 6,047 feet south of Mount Pisgah in North Carolina. Sudden changes in weather are common in these mountains. It is always a good idea to have a jacket and cap on hand, dress in layers, and to be aware of the local weather forecasts.*

**SPRING** – Springtime here in the mountains is a transitional period and very unpredictable. Winter weather can linger long after trees are greening up in the lowlands. Sunny skies can be followed quickly by cold fronts and snowy conditions. Afternoon rain showers are common. Below-freezing temperatures are still common throughout March and into mid April.

**SUMMER** – Summer is hot and humid as it is in most of the southeastern United States, but it is much more pleasant in the higher elevations. July and August high temperatures are typically in the 80s at mid to high elevations, warmer at the lower elevations. The summer temperatures can be considerably cooler at times and many times you will be glad to have a light jacket. Afternoon showers and thunderstorms are common and can move in quickly.

**FALL** – Warm days and cool nights are the normal conditions, with frost common at high elevations beginning in late September. By the time leaf color has peaked in late October, expect high temperatures to sometimes remain in the 50s and 60s. Freezing temperatures and snow are a possibility beginning in November.

**WINTER** – Extreme winter weather can occur here, with wind, ice and snow occurring even when the piedmont has pleasant conditions. Always be prepared for fast-approaching winter weather conditions and expect parts of the road to be closed due to ice and snow.

▶ Always check your favorite weather-related web sites for conditions prior to your visit any time of the year. The park information line, (828) 298 0398, is also a good source of park information.

## OTHER COMMON FLOWERS

**Birdfoot Violet** - (*Viola pedata*) 4-10 inches tall, bluish-purple flower. March — June  
**Columbine** - (*Aquilegia canadensis*) about 2 feet tall, nodding red and yellow flower. June — July  
**Sun Drops** - (*Oenothera fruticosa*) 1-2 feet tall, yellow 4-petal flower. June — July  
**Evening Primrose** - (*Oenothera biennis*) 3-5 feet tall, yellow 4-petal flower. June — July  
**Phlox** - (*Phlox* species) 2-6 feet tall, magenta-pink flowers. July — October  
**Touch-me-not** - (*Impatiens* species) 3-6 feet tall, nodding yellow or orange flower. July — August  
**Tall Bellflower** - (*Campanula americana*) 2-6 feet tall, blue, 5-petal flower. July — August  
**White Snakeroot** - (*Eupatorium rugosum*) 3-5 feet tall, bright white flower heads. July — Sept

# Showy Blooms

A Quick Guide to some flowers & shrubs on the Parkway

## Shrubs



**Catawba Rhododendron**  
 (*Rhododendron catawbiense*):  
 A medium shrub with pink to purple flowers growing above 3000 feet on exposed ridges.  
 June — Early July



**Rosebay Rhododendron**  
 (*Rhododendron maximum*): also called White Rhododendron: A large shrub with white to pink flowers, over a wide range of elevations.  
 June — July



**Flame Azalea**  
 (*Rhododendron calendulaceum*):  
 A medium shrub with bright orange to red flowers. Azaleas are in the rhododendron family.  
 June — July



**Wild Hydrangea**  
 (*Hydrangea arborescens*):  
 A medium shrub with large clusters of white flowers.  
 May — August



**Mountain Laurel**  
 (*Kalmia latifolia*):  
 A medium shrub with pink flowers.  
 June — July



**Pinxter Flower**  
 (*Rhododendron nudiflorum*):  
 A medium shrub with pink honeysuckle-like flowers, common at lower elevations.  
 April — May

## Flowers



**Fire Pink**  
 (*Silene virginica*):  
 This 6-20 inch plant has bright red flowers up to 1-1/2 inches wide.  
 April — June



**Goat's Beard**  
 (*Aruncus dioicus*):  
 3-5 feet tall with flower plumes 3-5 inches wide and 6-10 inches long.  
 May — June



**Bluets**  
 (*Houstonia* species):  
 3-6 inches tall with many small 4-petal flowers, light to dark blue. Bluets sometimes grow in large beds.  
 May-August



**Turks-Cap Lily**  
 (*Lilium superbum*):  
 6 to 10 feet tall with flowers 2-4 inches wide with a green star at center. The Carolina Lily (*L. michauxii*) is similar but lacks the green star and bears fewer flowers.  
 July-August



(*Trillium grandiflorum*):  
 The largest of several trilliums found along the parkway, grows to about 15 inches. Trilliums have 3 leaves and a single 3-petal flower.  
 April — May



**Bee Balm**  
 (*Monarda didyma*) also called Oswego Tea:  
 2-5 feet tall with bright red 2-inch flowers. Wild Bergamot is similar but pink.  
 July — August

**Dense Blazing Star** - (*Liatris spicata*) 2-4 feet tall, rose-purple flowered spike. August — Sept  
**Goldenrod** - (*Solidago* species) about 3 feet tall, golden-yellow spikes or plumes. August — Sept  
**Ox Eye Daisy** - (*Chrysanthemum leucanthemum*) 1-3 feet tall; white petals, yellow center.  
**Black-Eyed Susan** - (*Rudbeckia hirta*) 3-6 feet tall, yellow petals, black center.  
**Tall Coneflower** - (*Rudbeckia laciniata*) 2-3 feet tall, drooping yellow petals, green center.  
**Coreopsis** - (*Coreopsis major*) 2-3 feet tall, golden-yellow petals, green center.  
**Jerusalem Artichoke** - (*Helianthus tuberosus*) 5-10 feet tall, yellow petals, yellow center.  
**Aster** - (*Aster* species) 2-5 feet tall; many small flowers; blue, purple, or white petals.

# POPULAR HIKING TRAILS OF THE BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY

Hiking maps are available  
for some of the trails listed below.  
Check with the Visitor Center  
closest to the trailhead.

## Virginia Trails

Milepost	Trail - Miles - Difficulty
5.9	Farm Museum Trail 0.25 easy
34.4	Yankee Horse (logging RR) 0.2 moderate
60.8	Otter Creek 3.5 moderate
63.1	Otter Lake Loop 0.8 moderate
63.6	James River (canal locks) 0.2 easy
63.6	Trail of Trees Loop 0.5 moderate
78.4	Apple Orchard Falls 1.2 strenuous **
83.1	Fallingwater Cascades 1.6 moderate **
83.5	Flat Top 4.4 strenuous
85.7	Abbott Lake Loop 1.0 easy
85.9	Elk Run Loop 0.8 easy
85.9	Johnson Farm Loop 2.1 moderate
85.9	Harkening Hill 3.3 moderate
86.0	Sharp Top 1.6 strenuous
110.6	Stewart Knob 1.2 moderate
114.9	Roanoke River Loop 0.35 easy
120.4	Roanoke Mountain Summit 0.11 moderate
154.5	Smart View Loop 2.6 moderate
167.1	Rock Castle Gorge Loop 10.8 strenuous
176.2	Mabry Mill 0.5 easy
213.0	Fisher's Peak Loop 2.25 moderate

## North Carolina Trails

Milepost	Trail - Miles - Difficulty
217.5	Cumberland Knob 0.5 easy
230.1	Little Glade Millpond Loop 0.4 easy
241.0	Fodder Stack 1.0 moderate
271.9	Cascades Loop 0.5 moderate
294.0	Flat Top Mountain 3.0 moderate
294.1	Figure 8 Loop 0.7 easy
296.5	Boone Fork Loop 5.5 moderate-strenuous
297.0	Price Lake Loop 2.7 moderate
304.4	Linn Cove Viaduct Access 0.16 easy
305.2	Beacon Heights 0.2 moderate
305.5	Tanawha (MP 297 - 305) 13.5 moderate-strenuous D
316.4	Linville Falls, Erwins View 0.8 moderate
316.4	Linville Falls, Plunge Basin 0.5 strenuous
339.5	Crabtree Falls 2.5 strenuous
364.2	Craggy Pinnacle 0.7 moderate
407.6	Mt. Pisgah Summit 1.3 moderate-strenuous
407.6	Buck Springs (lodge to view) 1.06 easy-moderate
408.5	Frying Pan Mountain 1.06 moderate-strenuous
418.8	Graveyard Fields Stream Loop 2.3 moderate
431.0	Richland Balsam 1.5 moderate
451.2	Waterrock Knob Summit 0.6 moderate-strenuous

## North Carolina's Mountains-to-Sea Trail

The Mountains-to-Sea Trail (MST), when complete, will extend over 930 miles from Clingman's Dome, in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, to Jockey's Ridge on the North Carolina Outer Banks. Much of the MST parallels the Blue Ridge Parkway with many trail access points along the Parkway.

The Carolina Mountain Club maintains and builds trails from the Tanawha Trail to Stone Mountain (MP 305 - 236).

To volunteer, contact:

**Carolina  
Mountain Club**  
PO Box 10431  
Raleigh, NC • 27605  
[www.ncmst.org](http://www.ncmst.org)

Please note: Distances are one way except for loop trails. See trail maps for distances, features, walking conditions and important advice.

\*\* Designated National Recreation Trail. D=Tanawha has nine Parkway access points, several in the Grandfather Mountain area.

## Waterfall Hikes

Remember to always take caution while enjoying waterfalls around the Parkway. Do not climb on rocks near waterfalls and use extreme caution when walking along riverbanks. These rocks are slippery due to mist and algae. Never dive or jump into park waters. Submerged rocks, trees or debris could be immediately below the surface of the water.

Hiking to a waterfall can be a wonderful and rewarding experience. Below is a list of popular hikes with waterfalls along the Parkway.

- MP 78 Apple Orchard Falls** - These falls have a viewing platform directly underneath the falls, creating a refreshing shower during the summer months.
- MP 83 Falling Water Cascades** - Near Peaks of Otter, the trail is lined with rhododendrons, creating a beautiful hike setting.
- MP 316 Linville Falls** - Linville Falls has four different overlooks to properly appreciate the falls.
- MP 339 Crabtree Falls** - Originally, these falls were known as Murphy's Falls until the Park Service changed the name to Crabtree Falls when the Parkway was built in the 1930's.
- MP 411 Looking Glass Falls** - Looking Glass Falls is one of the most symmetrical waterfalls in western North Carolina. Travel east on 276. Sliding Rock and Moore Cove Falls are nearby.
- MP 417 Skinny Dip Falls** - Skinny Dip Falls features a swimming hole at the bottom of the cascades. These falls lie along the Mountains-to-Sea trail.
- MP 419 Graveyard Fields Falls** - The name "Graveyard Fields" originates from a time when a great windstorm felled hundreds of spruce and fir trees in the area. The moss covered stumps resemble graves.



# PARKS ARE 4 U!

*National Parks offer something for everyone...from the traditional park experiences to new and exciting Healthy Parks/Healthy People and youth oriented initiatives, these personal experiences can deepen your connection to America's National Parks. We invite you to join in or learn more about any of the following during your Parkway visit.*

## ► Ranger Led Programs

Rangers and park volunteers share their knowledge of the Parkway by presenting a variety of interpretive programs from June through October. Campfire talks, guided hikes, historic craft demonstrations, music, and nature study are some of the activities you and your family can enjoy. Specific schedules are posted at all developed areas.

## ► Junior Ranger Programs



A Junior Ranger is someone like you who cares for and learns about America's national parks so that others in the future may enjoy them. Ask for a handbook at any visitor center and begin your journey to becoming a Parkway Junior Ranger.

## ► Special Events

*Numerous special events occur on the Parkway.*

**Music and Art in the Mountains** - A celebration of the benefits of ART in our lives and their role in the establishment of the first National Park sites.

**The Transportation Festival at James River** - where exhibitors including the Virginia Canals and Navigation Society, a replica Batteau, the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad Heritage Museum, and an Antique Automobile Club exhibit the various forms of travel that have moved goods and people through the area historically.

**The Peaks of Otter Nature Center** - showcases the natural history of Virginia's mountain. Situated at the popular Sharp Top Mountain trailhead and bus stop, visitors can stop in before and after their venture up to Sharp Top.

**Join the crowd to enjoy traditional music concerts are held at Mabry Mill, Humpback Rocks and Roanoke Mountain Day Use area during the summer. Check the Parkway's calendar of events at [www.nps.gov/blri/planyourvisit/events.htm](http://www.nps.gov/blri/planyourvisit/events.htm)**

## Junior Conservationist Program:

### Take a Step to Sustainability



Sustainability means different things to different people. Ecologically speaking, sustainability means living within the resources of the planet without damaging the environment now or in the future. Awareness is the first step towards preserving this balance and National Parks are a great place to learn what steps you can take to help care for the planet. Ask how you can become a Junior Conservationist and Take a Step to Sustainability at any of the Parkway visitor centers.

## ► NPS Academy program



L-R: Casey Jenkins, University of Tampa; Jillian Cullen, State University of New York - Potsdam; Gabbi Romero, University of New Mexico; Callie Reuland, Indiana University; Rhakia Alcaez, California State University - Channel Islands; Not pictured: Claree James, University of Arkansas - Pine Bluff

The National Park Service and the Student Conservation Association have joined forces to develop the NPS Academy. The Academy is an innovative, experiential learning program designed to introduce undergraduate and graduate students from under-represented communities to career opportunities with the National Park Service.

To learn more go to

[www.thesca.org/serve/program/nps-academy](http://www.thesca.org/serve/program/nps-academy).

## ► Kids In Parks



The Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation's Kids in Parks TRACK Trails program is a network of self-guided hiking trails on and in communities along the Parkway. Each trail has a series of brochures designed to turn an ordinary hike into a fun-filled, discovery-packed adventure. Kids who hike these trails can register on the Kids in Parks website to win prizes that make their next outdoor adventure more fun. Visit the five TRACK Trails on the Blue Ridge Parkway at the Blue Ridge Parkway Visitor Center in Asheville, Peaks of Otter, Julian Price Park and the Blue Ridge Music Center. Learn more at [kidsinparks.com](http://kidsinparks.com)

## ► Mid Day Mountain Music

The sounds of the fiddle, banjo, and guitar are likely to welcome you when you visit the Blue Ridge Music Center. Experience regional traditional music each day of the week with FREE local Mid-Day Mountain Musicians playing on the breezeway of the visitors center from Noon - 4 PM.

### Mid Day Mountain Music



# WORKING TOGETHER TO PROTECT PARKWAY VIEWSHEDS



Unfolding a map of the Parkway reveals its most identifiable and notable feature ...it is long and narrow! This shape affects management of the park and the visitors' experience as well. Along the majority of the Parkway, the boundary remains close at hand, and the long, sweeping views that we enjoy from the ridgetops extend all the way to the horizon.



During construction of the Parkway, local residents referred to the overlooks as "balconies" and the Parkway remains today as something of a platform or a balcony for many visitors. People enjoy climbing up high and looking out into valleys and across distant mountain ranges, and into rural landscapes and local communities.

This idea, the horizon as the boundary, also creates unique challenges today for those who manage the Parkway, since the park was designed to take full advantage of these scenic views. Decisions made outside the park boundary in the communities along the way affect the visitors' experience and, in a similar way, every decision made by Parkway management is done with the understanding that this can affect the neighboring communities.

Surveys of visitors indicate that the primary reasons they come here are for recreation and for viewing scenery. Such surveys suggest a direct relationship

between changing land uses and reduced revenues in counties where the scenic quality of views is diminished. Land-use changes in the 29 counties along the Parkway are dramatically altering the scenic quality as viewed from some 1,200 Parkway roadside and overlook vistas.

Another aspect of the viewshed issue that is becoming more of a concern to visitors is the amount of vegetation growth along the boundary blocking the view that visitors want to see. Keeping overlooks and vistas cleared is time consuming and labor intensive. As so often is the case on the Parkway, partners and cooperators have come to our aid to assist. Haywood County, North Carolina has donated funds in recent years specifically earmarked for clearing vistas in those high elevation areas south of Asheville where visitors look out into that mountain county. In Virginia, in 2014, the Friends of the Blue Ridge Parkway license plate program has generated the necessary funds for bringing in an expert group of National Park Service arborists and chain saw crew to clear over two dozen vistas and viewsheds in the Roanoke, VA region.

The Parkway may look simple on a map - a long, thin, blue line meandering down the mountains between Shenandoah and the Smokies. But keeping the magnificent views to the horizon as they were intended in the early days is a challenge that will continue for years to come.

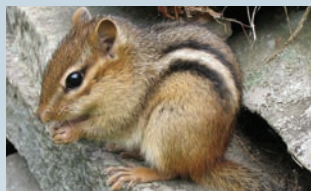


*Above: Before and after vista clearing and a proud work crew. photos by Exposure Roanoke Camera Club*



# "MAKING A DIFFERENCE" A RESPONSIBLE VISIT

- The best diet for all animals is a natural one. Human food can make any wild animal sick. The digestive system of a white tail deer, common around campgrounds and picnic areas, only breaks down the natural food sources including twigs, bark, leaves, grasses and acorns. Wild animals like the taste of human food, but for their safety and health, do not feed them.
- The Parkway has unique habitats that support rare and endangered plants and animals. Many of these plants are threatened by foot traffic. The problem can be alleviated by the simple practice of staying on the trail. There are several especially sensitive areas, including the Tanawha Trail around Grandfather Mountain, the Craggy Pinnacle Trail at Craggy Gardens, and at Devil's Courthouse. Whether you suspect the presence of rare plants or not, please stay on the trail – if for no other reason than to protect all plants and to prevent erosion.
- Rabies can be transmitted by most wild animals. Animals in the park should not be treated as pets or lured close enough to feed or touch. If a squirrel, chipmunk, or other animal comes close without your encouragement, it could be a sign of serious illness. Please tell a ranger.
- All plants on the Parkway are protected. Many of our native wildflowers in the Blue Ridge are threatened by illegal harvesting. The large, round, shiny evergreen leaves of Galax have been gathered commercially in the southern Appalachian mountains for generations for decorative uses in floral arrangements. Now harvested on a much larger scale, they are being shipped to flower shops around the world.



## Other Important Safety Advice

- Hiking shoes or boots are recommended for most trails, especially the more strenuous ones. Steep and rocky areas and slippery stream crossings require extra attention and careful footing. Even for trails marked "easy," it is advisable to wear flat or rubber-soled shoes for comfort and good traction. Wearing sandals, "flip-flops," or high heels can result in accidents.
- Lock valuables in the trunk of your car or take them with you.
- Sudden changes in weather are common in these mountains. Even in mild seasons, rapid dips in temperature and unexpected thunderstorms frequently occur, and at higher elevations the wind and temperature can carry a surprising chill. Be prepared for weather changes by bringing along suitable clothing.
- Do not drink the water from streams or springs.

## Connecting With NPS- Blue Ridge Parkway:

**Please visit our website [www.nps.gov/blri](http://www.nps.gov/blri) for Parkway travel updates, points of interest, suggestions and more from NPS staff.**

*You can also visit our social media sites for NPS updates and fun facts about the Blue Ridge Parkway:*



[facebook.com/BlueRidgeNPS](https://facebook.com/BlueRidgeNPS)



[twitter.com/blueridgenps](https://twitter.com/blueridgenps)



[BlueRidgeParkwayNPS](https://www.youtube.com/BlueRidgeParkwayNPS)

### **Real Time Road Closure Map:**

**[maps.nps.gov/blri/road-closures](https://maps.nps.gov/blri/road-closures)**  
*Check for weather or construction-related closures updated daily by Blue Ridge Parkway staff.*

## Mount Mitchell State Park, NC

Mount Mitchell is the highest point in eastern North America, rising to 6,684 feet. A Mount Mitchell State Park map with trail information is available at the state park headquarters, two miles up NC State Highway 128 from the park entrance at Milepost 355.4. Write to Mount Mitchell State Park, 2388 State Hwy 128, Burnsville, NC 28714 or call (828) 675 4611. [www.ncparks.gov](http://www.ncparks.gov)

## Appalachian Trail, VA

The Appalachian Trail parallels the first 100 miles of the Blue Ridge Parkway to a point just north of Roanoke VA. There are many trail access points along this section of the Parkway. For more information, please refer to Appalachian Trail publications. [www.nps.gov/appa](http://www.nps.gov/appa)

## Traditional Music Trails

From the Parkway, travelers can easily find this music in towns and venues throughout the region:

- Blue Ridge Music Trails: [www.BlueRidgeMusicNC.com](http://www.BlueRidgeMusicNC.com)

- The Crooked Road: [www.thecrookedroad.org](http://www.thecrookedroad.org)

These driving trails lead them to towns and venues throughout the region. Downtown Floyd, VA becomes a picker's paradise on Friday nights around the Floyd Country Store. Asheville's downtown also fosters the creative juices of street musicians and informal jam sessions. Annual fiddlers' conventions are too numerous to name, but the Old Time Fiddlers' Convention in Galax, VA and The Mountain Dance and Folk Festival in Asheville, NC both trace their origins to the 1920s & 1930s.



# GOING GREEN

## *Along the Parkway*

### FOSTERING STEWARDSHIP THROUGH FLEET GREENING



***The new hybrid and propane vehicles are expected to save 2,000 gallons of fuel each year.***

The Blue Ridge Parkway is much more than just a roadway connecting Shenandoah and Great Smoky Mountains National Parks. It is one of the nation's most biologically diverse parks as well. One of the challenges in daily operations and management of the Blue Ridge Parkway is its linear layout. Serving the visiting public and taking care of park resources requires more than a dozen field offices along its length. The 300 park-owned vehicles and heavy equipment must respond to the demands of mountainous terrain, often traveling 50 or more miles each day. This large fleet as well as the millions of travelers on the road put the

Blue Ridge Parkway in a unique position to be a leader in sound environmental practices and in promoting the use of advanced technology vehicles.

The U.S. Department of Energy's Clean Cities Program partnering through the Clean Cities National Parks Initiative seems to be the perfect fit for this linear park. The Initiative supports transportation projects that educate park visitors on the benefits of reducing dependence on petroleum, cutting greenhouse gasses, and easing traffic congestion. This Initiative also complements the National Park Service's Climate Friendly Parks program by demonstrating the environmental benefits of reducing petroleum use.

With the majority of the Parkway's vehicle fleet in need of replacement, Parkway management has seized the opportunity for "greening up" our vehicle fleet. Partnering with Asheville, NC's "Land of the Sky Clean Vehicle Coalition," the Parkway acquired four hybrid passenger vehicles and three propane pickup trucks to replace less efficient vehicles. These new efficient vehicles will be added to a fleet already modernized with 51 vehicles that are designed to use E85 fuel.

These steps are part of the Parkway's overall Fleet Management Plan, incorporating strategies to reduce the petroleum use in the park 30% by 2020. This plan will include proposed reduction of the overall fleet size, continued replacement of existing vehicles with more energy efficient or alternative fuel vehicles, reducing overall miles traveled, and implementation of gas-saving driving techniques. In the years ahead, the Parkway also expects to expand the use of E85 alternative fuel systems and incorporate additional hybrid electric and bi-fuel vehicles into the fleet. Working with the Land of the Sky Clean Vehicles Coalition and the Virginia Clean Cities Coalition, these and other strategies will be pursued.

The new hybrid and propane vehicles are expected to save 2,000 gallons of fuel each year. These vehicles will be out on the Parkway this season, marked with "Clean Cities" and the NPS Arrowhead, providing a tangible tool that exemplifies the National Park Service commitment to reducing its carbon footprint. As stewards of our national cultural and natural treasures, the NPS is taking a leading role in sustainability and climate change mitigation to ensure these special places are around for the enjoyment of future generations.



# “LEEDING” THE WAY AT THE PARKWAY VISITOR CENTER

Located at  
Milepost 384

*The Blue Ridge Parkway took a huge step forward in going green when the visitor center adjacent to park headquarters in Asheville, NC opened in 2008. Not only can visitors now make one stop to learn about the entire 469 miles of the Parkway, they can do so in an environmentally friendly, “LEED” certified building, reflecting the best in energy-saving technology.*



What does it mean to be **LEED certified**? The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification promotes self-supporting design and calculates the environmental function of a building and the environmentally-friendly measures taken during construction and subsequent use of the building. The USGBC established this system to encourage green building practices and techniques.

Less than a year after its opening, the visitor center received LEED’s “Gold” status, a rating that acknowledges the building’s design exceeds the standards for energy efficiency. Green buildings are not only good for the environment, they are good for us as well. Such construction means blending the building into its natural surroundings, less waste going to the landfill, lower operating costs, improved indoor air quality, and reduced air pollution.

Among the most notable features of the green design of the Parkway visitor center include...

🌿 **Green Roof** - The 10,000 square foot roof of the visitor center is completely planted with native, drought tolerant plants. Green roofs last longer, reduce energy costs with their natural insulation, and are thought to improve air quality by filtering out dust and smog.

🌿 **Radiant Floor Heating** - Tubing installed in the building’s concrete floor has circulating warm water, allowing the concrete to absorb the heat and warm the building.

🌿 **Trombe Walls** - Some of the best eco-friendly design features are also the most simple and non-mechanical. Thick walls resulting in good insulation have been a part of smart design for generations. Solar

heat is collected and stored in thick walls, tempering day time heat gain and releasing heat at night. The 12” thick glass and concrete walls in the visitor center mean slow, even heating long after the sun has set in the winter. The angle of the building and its designed overhang keep the walls from heating up in the summer.

🌿 **Natural Materials** - The use of natural materials in construction, purchased within a 500 mile radius, minimizing freight costs and aiding the local economy.

🌿 **Rainwater** - A storm water runoff system captures rainwater either for use on site or allowing water to filter slowly back into the ground.



While enjoying the benefits of this most recent and most “green” Parkway facility, visitors can of course find out all they need to know about planning a full Parkway experience. The interactive I-Wall, a 22 foot map of the Parkway with multimedia information of places to visit is a great place to begin. A 24 minute award-winning film “The Blue Ridge Parkway – America’s Favorite Journey” is shown hourly. Explore exhibits of the region’s natural and cultural diversity and the recreational opportunities available. The Blue Ridge National Heritage Area has offices here and provides information on the region.

In addition to year-round orientation of the Parkway and the Blue Ridge region, the National Park Service takes pride that the structure itself will continue to exemplify natural resource stewardship for years to come.

## Parkway Partners in Action

# HOW YOU CAN HELP

Perhaps one of these groups has a place for you to help!

The first National Park Service Director Stephen T. Mather said 'establishment of parks is not enough, what is needed are more people who will take the time to gain a better understanding of the important issues facing our National Parks.'

Increasingly partnerships and volunteer service are essential and effective means for the National Park Service to fulfill parts of our mission and foster a shared sense of stewardship that is so crucial for our future. Stephen Mather knew that building public support for the newly established National Park System was crucial for its future.

Fortunately, many non-profit partner groups today work hand-in-hand with the Blue Ridge Parkway. While these organizations have differing missions, they share an overarching goal: to preserve and enhance the national treasure that is the Blue Ridge Parkway. Learn more and get involved in their work.

### BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY ASSOCIATION:

[www.blueridgeparkway.org](http://www.blueridgeparkway.org)

### BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY FOUNDATION:

[www.brpfoundation.org](http://www.brpfoundation.org)

### BLUE RIDGE NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA:

[www.blueridgeheritage.com](http://www.blueridgeheritage.com)

### CAROLINA MOUNTAIN CLUB:

[www.carolinamountainclub.org](http://www.carolinamountainclub.org)

### CONSERVATION TRUST FOR NORTH CAROLINA:

[www.ctnc.org](http://www.ctnc.org)

### EASTERN NATIONAL:

[www.easternnational.org](http://www.easternnational.org)

### FRIENDS OF THE BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY:

[www.blueridgefriends.org](http://www.blueridgefriends.org)



In addition, volunteers are vital to the success of the National Park Service (NPS). The Volunteers-In-Parks (VIP) Program at Blue Ridge Parkway works to preserve the cultural heritage, history, and natural resources of the Parkway region by helping to provide visitor services, education, interpretation, and resource protection programs and activities.

For more information about volunteering on the Blue Ridge Parkway visit <http://www.nps.gov/blri/supportyourpark/volunteer.htm> or use this QR code.

## Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation



Mabry Mill. Photo: Vicki Dameron

The Blue Ridge Parkway is no ordinary road. With grand mountains, rich Appalachian culture, stunning landscapes, and outdoor adventures from beginning to end, this exceptional journey connects us to the natural wonders and enriching heritage of our mountains.

Maintaining the ribbon of road, overlooks, forests, trails, historic sites, and more requires steady commitment, ample resources, and on-the-ground work. Unlike many popular National Parks, the Parkway receives no income from entrance fees. By supporting the Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation, you play a role in sustaining and nurturing this national treasure. Without your support, many of the resources, amenities, and services often taken for granted would vanish. Whether your interests are in education, environmental and resource protection, visitor amenities, or cultural heritage, you can join the thousands of others who understand the importance of preserving this route that

forever ties us to the grandeur and rich history of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Visit [BRPFoundation.org](http://BRPFoundation.org) to become a member of our Community of Stewards.

*Discover Your  
Journey...  
Then Help Us  
Protect It.*

### Contact INFO

For a full list of Foundation projects, please visit:  
[BRPFoundation.org/projects](http://BRPFoundation.org/projects)  
or call (866) 308-2773

**BRPFoundation.org**  
"A Community of Stewards"





## Parkway Partners in Action

# BLUE RIDGE NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA

*The Blue Ridge National Heritage Area (BRNHA) expands the stewardship of the mountains and foothills of North Carolina beyond the boundaries of the Parkway and other national parks in the region.*

*In fact, it reaches across 11,000 square miles of mountains, valleys, rolling hills, rivers, lakes, and communities large and small. It's a land with a heritage so rich and important to the history of the nation and the state that in 2003 it was designated a National Heritage Area. The Blue Ridge Parkway serves as a gateway to communities throughout this vast region and offers a premier opportunity for visitors to enjoy the spectacular natural heritage that is the cornerstone of the designation.*

*The other heritage legacies included in the legislation are the region's traditional mountain music, crafts, agriculture and Cherokee culture.*

## Blue Ridge Music Trails of North Carolina

Western North Carolina has a national reputation as a music-rich region, and its traditions of old-time stringband music, ballad singing and bluegrass are internationally renowned. The artistry of our musicians has shaped many forms of American music.

## DID YOU KNOW:

- ▶ No other place has had more influence on the development of the banjo in America.
- ▶ One of the longest, unbroken ballad singing traditions in America is found in Madison County.
- ▶ Team square dancing first originated in the 1930s in Haywood County.
- ▶ More ballad singers, old-time fiddlers and banjo players from WNC have been awarded the National Heritage Fellowship, our nation's greatest honor in the traditional arts, than any other state.
- ▶ MerleFest in Wilkesboro, NC, is one of the nation's largest and most influential "Americana" music events.

## Visitor Services



The BRNHA Partnership staffs an information desk at the Parkway Visitor Center in Asheville, helping visitors find things to see and do in the communities both along and off the Parkway.

## BRNHA Grants Create New Heritage Attractions

Grants from the BRNHA Partnership help fund the enhancement of existing and development of new heritage attractions in all parts of the region. These projects aim to give visitors a deeper understanding of the natural and cultural treasures that make this region so special.



*A grant from the BRNHA helped develop the Cherokee Homestead Exhibit in Hayesville, NC.*



Traditional music can be heard everywhere from hometown oprys and informal jam sessions to music halls and concert stages, such as the Blue Ridge Music Center on the Parkway. Festivals and old-time music conventions, some dating back almost a century,

offer an abundance of opportunities for visitors to experience this authentic heritage throughout the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area.

Learn when and where to hear the music at [BlueRidgeMusicNC.com](http://BlueRidgeMusicNC.com), where you'll find a comprehensive events calendar for traditional music events and much more.



*The Blue Ridge Music Trails of North Carolina is a signature project of the BRNHA Partnership and the North Carolina Arts Council.*

[BlueRidgeMusicNC.com](http://BlueRidgeMusicNC.com)



The offices of the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area are in the Blue Ridge Parkway Visitor Center in Asheville.

828-298-5330  
[BlueRidgeHeritage.com](http://BlueRidgeHeritage.com)

## Parkway Partners in Action

# BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY FOUNDATION

*The Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation brings people together to protect and preserve the natural, cultural, and historic resources of the Blue Ridge Parkway and cultivate a new generation of stewards for this beloved journey. The Parkway provides visitors with so many rich experiences and deserves our care in return. Yet, the funds to sustain and enhance this special place are limited. As the primary private fundraiser for the Blue Ridge Parkway, the Foundation has provided more than \$6 million to fund critical projects—all thanks to thousands of people determined to address real needs that could jeopardize the future of this national treasure.*

## Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation

Each year, the Foundation adopts new projects that enhance the experience and protect the Blue Ridge Parkway for its visitors, which total more than Yellowstone,



Photo: Monty E. Combs

Yosemite, and Grand Canyon National Parks combined. Think of all the journeys shared, trails explored, campsites enjoyed, historic sites visited, and the impact each has on every traveler. Many national parks charge entrance fees, but Blue Ridge Parkway visitors enjoy all the scenic road has to offer for free. Without funding from park fees, outside support is critical to maintain the wealth of resources along the 469-mile ribbon of road. Whether it's preservation efforts at Moses Cone Memorial Park or trail repairs at Price and Abbott lakes, the Foundation works to give Parkway visitors a well-rounded and memorable experience. When donors join in our efforts, they become members of our Community of Stewards and ensure a bright horizon for the journeys and generations to come. Visit [www.brpfoundation.org](http://www.brpfoundation.org) to learn more.



## Kids in Parks

The Blue Ridge Parkway is the birthplace of the Foundation's Kids in Parks program, which started as a single trail opened at the Visitor Center near Asheville. The program has since expanded nationwide with a network of TRACK Trails for families. Through self-guided brochures that feature mascots, TRACK the dog and KIP the dragonfly, children are guided along family-friendly trails, encouraging them to explore the natural world and get active. The program is effectively engaging children through activities and building their connection to parks that serve as enriching community resources. To find a trail along the Blue Ridge Parkway, visit [www.kidsinparks.com](http://www.kidsinparks.com).



## Blue Ridge Music Center



The Blue Ridge Music Center, milepost 213, is fertile ground for the rich sounds of the Blue Ridge Mountains, whether showcasing songs that have endured for generations or the evolving interpretations of young musicians

embracing their musical heritage. The Foundation oversees the musical programming at this National Park Service venue, planning stage performances every weekend from May through October, and helping organize free, daily Midday Mountain Musician concerts. The concerts complement the Roots of American Music Exhibit at the onsite museum. To plan a visit and secure concert tickets, visit [www.blueridgemusiccenter.org](http://www.blueridgemusiccenter.org).

[www.brpfoundation.org](http://www.brpfoundation.org)  
(866) 308-2773



## Parkway Partners in Action

# FRIENDS OF THE BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY

*FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway is the official membership and volunteer partner organization of the National Park Service Blue Ridge Parkway. For over 26 years FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway has provided a means for its members and volunteers to preserve, protect and enhance the Parkway.*

*The cornerstone work of FRIENDS is to provide volunteer and financial support to the Parkway in such a way that cultivates stewardship among neighboring communities, organizations, businesses and individuals of all ages: children, students and adults alike. Work is accomplished annually on overlooks, trails, viewshed maintenance, volunteer programs, and special projects that meet park needs in maintenance, resource management, education, and interpretation. Visit [www.FriendsBRP.org](http://www.FriendsBRP.org) to learn how you can become a FRIEND of the Blue Ridge Parkway and protect this national treasure for future generations. Every \$1 invested in FRIENDS generates \$4 in volunteer service.*

## Saving Parkway Views

Visitors to the Blue Ridge Parkway come in no small part for the scenic views. The blazing fall leaves, lush forests, long distance vistas and spring flower blooms draw visitors back year after year. FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway established the Saving Parkway Views program to restore the breathtaking views that keep visitors coming to the Parkway year after year. The program's mission is two-fold:



- Tree plantings restore the ecological buffer zone between the Parkway and encroaching development. Since the program began, 6,440 trees have been planted in areas where views and ecological buffers have been compromised.
- Throughout the 469-mile corridor, hundreds of overlooks and vistas which were so carefully selected and sited by the late parkway architect Stanley Abbott, have become overgrown. With funds raised through Virginia Blue Ridge Parkway license plate sales, overlooks and vistas have begun to be cleared starting with the Fall 2014 week-long blitz in the Roanoke area.



FRIENDS is an authorized National Park Service Blue Ridge Parkway partner organization. FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway, Inc., a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation, organized and existing under the laws of the State of North Carolina and the Commonwealth of Virginia, whose current principal business address for identification purposes is P.O. Box 20986, Roanoke, Virginia 24014. Tax ID #: 58-1854404. Consider leaving a Blue Ridge Parkway Legacy of support to Blue Ridge Parkway's Future by remembering FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway, Inc. in your will.

*"I have a stronger connection with the land now, a different land. It has made me realize that there isn't just one type of ecosystem that I have to conserve; there are many."*

## FRIENDS Network of Chapters



FRIENDS Chapters are the backbone of our work on the Blue Ridge Parkway. Because of a continual decrease in national funding, volunteers are vital to ensuring the survival of our Park.

In 2014 volunteers working through their local Chapters throughout Parkway communities main-tained 233 miles of trails, and cleaned up thousands of pounds of trash and recyclables at overlooks and roadside. They repaired fences, prepared camp-grounds for summer visitors, and documented historic cemetery sites. They hosted college students through FRIENDS Alternative Break Program, to provide service projects on the Parkway. Parkway volunteers provide thousands of hours of invaluable service annually working alongside National Park Service Blue Ridge Parkway staff to preserve the Parkway and enhance visitors' experiences.

## Cultivating Future Stewards

FRIENDS' commitment to stewardship of the Parkway drives our work today and our focus on the future. The Future Stewards program educates and engages today's youth in conservation, ecology and forest stewardship, fostering long-term commitment and volunteerism for this pristine park and its incredible natural resources.



Engaging young people, from elementary school to college age, as volunteers gives them a first-hand look at the impact of their work and helps to develop a lifelong love of the outdoors. FRIENDS funds environmental education for youth through the Youth Volunteers-in-Parks program, supports Summer student internships on the Parkway as well as an Alternative Spring Break program that brings in groups of university students for spring and fall projects on the Parkway.

540.772.2992  
[www.FriendsBRP.org](http://www.FriendsBRP.org)